

Frequently Asked Questions About the Fall 2006 Grades 3-9 MEAP Assessment Results

1) *Since the assessments were taken in Fall 2006 at the beginning of the school year, what content was tested?*

Tests taken in Fall 2006 covered content taught in the previous year for mathematics and English language arts (reading and writing). Mathematics and English language arts assessments are administered in each grade from Grade 3 to Grade 8. Science and social studies assessments are only administered once at the end of elementary school and once at the end of middle school. Fall 2006 assessments for science and social studies covered content from the previous 2-3 grade levels.

2) *Why are the MEAP assessments given in fall instead of winter or spring?*

MEAP assessments are given in fall for several reasons. Fall testing allows assessment of the full previous year of instruction and measures student learning that was retained over the summer break. Fall MEAP administration ends early in the school year and encourages teachers to proceed quickly into teaching the current year curriculum.

3) *Can Fall Grade 3-9 2006 scores be compared to Fall Grade 3-9 2005 scores for the same grade and subject?*

Beginning with Fall 2005, assessments are based on new content standards for both English language arts and Mathematics, and the assessment period was moved from winter to fall.

While comparisons may be made from Fall 2006 Grades 3-9 to Fall 2005 Grades 3-9, it would be inappropriate to make comparisons to scores previous to Fall 2005.

Summary reports for Fall 2006 do show results for both Fall 2006 and Fall 2005.

4) *How are the reading and writing scores combined into a score for English language arts (ELA)? Has this rule changed? Did this rule change have an impact?*

Reading and writing scores are combined into a total ELA score by taking 2/3 of each student's reading score and adding it to 1/3 of the writing score.

5) *Can these scores be used to get a preview of the school's status in terms of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?*

No. The process for determining the AYP status for a school or district is very complex, involving data from many sources. AYP status will be reported separately by the state. Schools may expect to receive preliminary status reports in early May 2007.

- 6) *My school's fourth graders learned the content assessed in October 2006 at the K-3 school that they attended in 2005-06. How will this be reflected making decisions based on the 2006-07 data?***

Because the fall assessments were based on content taught in the prior grade level in 2005-06, feeder school reports will be used to attribute student performance for AYP to the school where instruction occurred in 2005-06.

- 7) *Some of the students assessed at our school were not enrolled at the school during 2005-06. Their scores do not reflect learning that occurred at our school. Why are these scores included in the public release?***

The public MEAP results report on the performance of all students who were assessed at the building. MEAP has a 35-year history of including all students in the public reports. However, the scores of students enrolled less than a full academic year prior to testing will be excluded from the data used to determine if the school meets Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

- 8) *Do these scores reflect the Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) in English language arts and mathematics?***

Yes. The scores are based on assessments which were built specifically to measure the new content standards (the GLCEs).

- 9) *How can students with disabilities be held to the same standards as other students?***

If students with disabilities took the MEAP, they are indeed held to the same standards as all other students. There are accommodations provided to assist students with specific disabilities (for example, a Braille version), but the students are all held to the same standards. However, if students with disabilities took MI-Access (Michigan's alternate assessments for students with cognitive disabilities), those students are assessed using alternate achievement standards that reflect the cognitive levels of those students. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 plans are developed for each student with disabilities by stakeholders in that student's education (e.g., parents, teachers, counselors, etc.). Those teams of stakeholders have the responsibility of determining which assessment test is the most appropriate for each student with disabilities and, therefore, the standards to which they should be held.